



News Release

STATE OF MARYLAND

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND CORRECTIONAL SERVICES

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Division of Correction Community Works Inmate Crew Assists with Maintenance at Veterans Cemetery in Crownsville

TOWSON, MD (June 25, 2008)---A new joint community works project underway by the Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (DPSCS) and the Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs is providing an opportunity for inmates to give back to Maryland's veterans and their memory by maintaining the grounds of the State veteran cemeteries.

The first project is occurring at the Crownsville Veterans Cemetery in Anne Arundel County. Five days a week, a Division of Correction inmate crew assists in maintaining and improving the grounds, and performs general maintenance for the grave sites of over 15,000 men and women, and their dependents, who served this country.

The cemetery detail is comprised of five to six inmates, who are themselves veterans, from the Brockbridge Correctional Facility, a minimum/pre-release institution in Jessup. To be considered for this duty, inmates must not have been dishonorably discharged from the service, and must be eligible for burial in a veteran cemetery as well. Their status is verified through the Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs.

This pilot project is part of a DPSCS push to help Veterans Affairs maintain their five veterans cemeteries located across the state. The goal is to create and sustain a partnership between the two state agencies as a way for offenders to not only give back to surrounding communities, but to learn work skills that are transferable upon release.

"As a veteran myself, I am proud to see our veteran inmates stepping up to take on this task," stated Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services Secretary Gary D. Maynard.

"This is an opportunity for our inmates to learn a skill while giving back. It's just one of several community works projects we've begun over the past year to increase offender work opportunities, which often provide them their first chance to feel a sense of responsibility and ownership for the community they come from."

James A. Adkins, the Secretary for the Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs

added, "This is a great opportunity for our incarcerated veterans to continue to serve their fellow veterans and our state."